



# BOONE AND CROCKETT PRONGHORN

# A GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

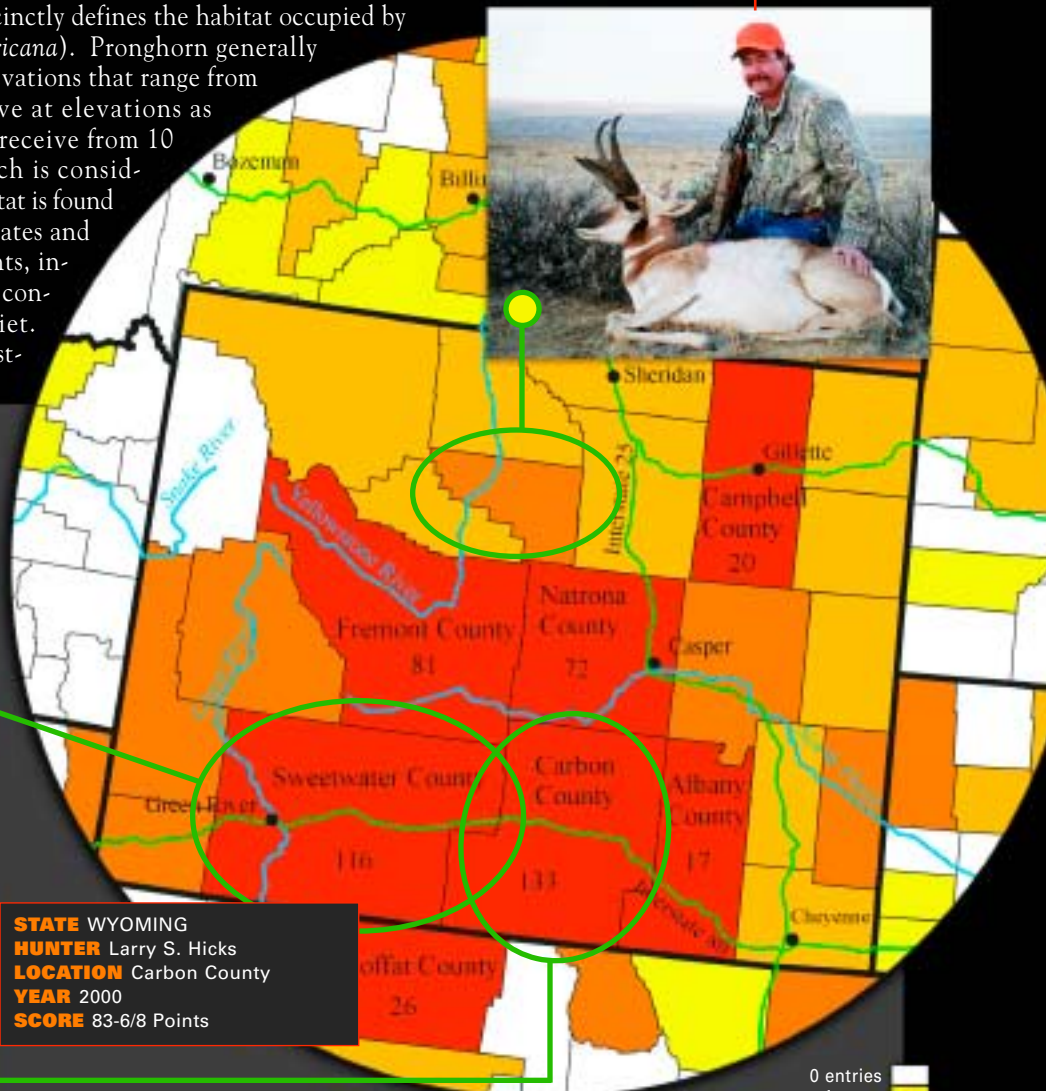
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**“Pronghorns have sagebrush in their blood, distance in their eyes, and hot western wind in their nostrils”**

Gary Turbak in *Pronghorn: Portrait of the American Antelope*

I believe this statement accurately and succinctly defines the habitat occupied by the pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*). Pronghorn generally live in areas of prairie or semi-desert at elevations that range from 4,000 to 6,000 feet, although some thrive at elevations as high as 11,000 feet. These areas tend to receive from 10 to 15 inches of precipitation a year, which is considered semi-desert. This arid, high plains habitat is found in large expanses of the western United States and supports a surprisingly wide variety of plants, including many forbs and browse species that constitute the majority of the pronghorn's diet. The pronghorn's range includes all the west-

**STATE** WYOMING  
**HUNTER** Mark I. Walker  
**LOCATION** Washakie County  
**YEAR** 2001  
**SCORE** 84-6/8 Points



**STATE** WYOMING  
**HUNTER** Eva Carrillo  
**LOCATION** Sweetwater County  
**YEAR** 1997  
**SCORE** 80-4/8 Points



**STATE** WYOMING  
**HUNTER** Larry S. Hicks  
**LOCATION** Carbon County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 83-6/8 Points

Wyoming ranks as the top state for trophy pronghorn with 538 entries.



**STATE** OREGON  
**HUNTER** Marvin K. Champ  
**LOCATION** Harney County  
**YEAR** 1999  
**SCORE** 84-2/8 Points



**STATE** IDAHO  
**HUNTER** David R. Harrow  
**LOCATION** Cassia County  
**YEAR** 1999  
**SCORE** 82 Points

**STATE** NEVADA  
**HUNTER** Jared R. Pekuri  
**LOCATION** Nye County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 85 Points



**STATE** UTAH  
**HUNTER** Jeffery K. Harrow  
**LOCATION** Box Elder County  
**YEAR** 1999  
**SCORE** 80-2/8 Points



**STATE** ARIZONA  
**HUNTER** Brian B. Bingham  
**LOCATION** Yavapai County  
**YEAR** 1999  
**SCORE** 89-4/8 Points

**STATE** TEXAS  
**HUNTER** Linda J. McBride  
**LOCATION** Hudspeth County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 89-2/8 Points



**PRONGHORN DISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED STATES**



**STATE** MONTANA  
**HUNTER** William B. Hartman  
**LOCATION** Garfield County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 80-6/8 Points

**STATE** WYOMING  
**HUNTER** Don E. Perrien  
**LOCATION** Carbon County  
**YEAR** 1999  
**SCORE** 84-2/8 Points



**STATE** COLORADO  
**HUNTER** Frank S. Noska IV  
**LOCATION** Moffat County  
**YEAR** 2001  
**SCORE** 81-2/8 Points



**STATE** UTAH  
**HUNTER** Charles A. Lantry  
**LOCATION** Rich County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 83 Points



**STATE** NEW MEXICO  
**HUNTER** Cory V. Travis  
**LOCATION** Colfax County  
**YEAR** 1996  
**SCORE** 80 Points



**STATE** TEXAS  
**HUNTER** John K. Mikeman  
**LOCATION** Hartley County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 82 Points



**STATE** NEW MEXICO  
**HUNTER** Peeler G. Lacey  
**LOCATION** Socorro County  
**YEAR** 1998  
**SCORE** 82-2/8 Points



ern states except Washington, the Canadian provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, and northern Mexico.

Of course, this current range is considerably smaller than it was prior to European settlement, when pronghorn thrived in immense numbers (30 to 60 million?), including the central plains as far east as the Mississippi River. In the succeeding years the pronghorn's range shrunk and their numbers declined, and by the early 1900s it was estimated that only 10,000 to 15,000 remained. Through a program of protection and reintroduction supported by hunters, conservationists, and organizations such as the Boone and Crockett Club, the pronghorn once again roams in large numbers. Although continually fluctuating, most experts estimate the current population of pronghorn antelope at approximately one million.

Mapping the Boone and Crockett Club's records book provides both an indication of its present range and the areas that tend to produce higher numbers of records book bucks.

TOP PRONGHORN STATES	
1. Wyoming	538 entries
2. New Mexico	338 entries
3. Arizona	229 entries
4. Nevada	151 entries
5. Montana	117 entries
6. Oregon	99 entries

The records book contains 1,996 entries, spanning the years 1899 to 2002.

Mapping these entries requires that county information be provided, eliminating 215 entries. Entries not mapped were mainly from Wyoming (93), Alberta (33), and Arizona (27), with the remaining coming from 12 states (50), Saskatchewan (9), Mexico (2), and one entry from 1950 that did not provide a state. Therefore the maps and related text in this article refer to the distribution of 1,781 pronghorn entries.

Entries have been recorded from 16 different states, with Oklahoma being the only state with an entry that is not otherwise represented on the map. Wyoming has the most entries with 538 or 30% of the records book. New Mexico is second with 338, followed by Arizona (229), Nevada (151), Montana (117), Oregon (99), Texas (79), Colorado (70), Utah (54), California (40), Idaho (21), South Dakota (17), Nebraska (16), North Dakota (8), and Kansas (4). The 13-year period from 1990-2002 accounts for 1,002 or 56% of the records book entries. A total of 479 entries originated during



**STATE** ARIZONA  
**HUNTER** Keith Martin  
**LOCATION** Coconino County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 82-2/8 Points



**STATE** ARIZONA  
**HUNTER** Denise S. Rhodes  
**LOCATION** Apache County  
**YEAR** 1998  
**SCORE** 84-6/8 Points

**STATE** NEW MEXICO  
**HUNTER** Mark W. Streissguth  
**LOCATION** Mora County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 84-6/8 Points



**STATE** NEW MEXICO  
**HUNTER** Len H. Guldman  
**LOCATION** Socorro County  
**YEAR** 1999  
**SCORE** 90 Points

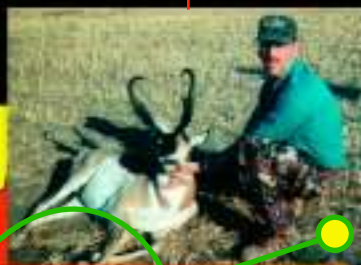


**STATE** ARIZONA  
**HUNTER** James M. Machac  
**LOCATION** Yavapai County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 89-6/8 Points

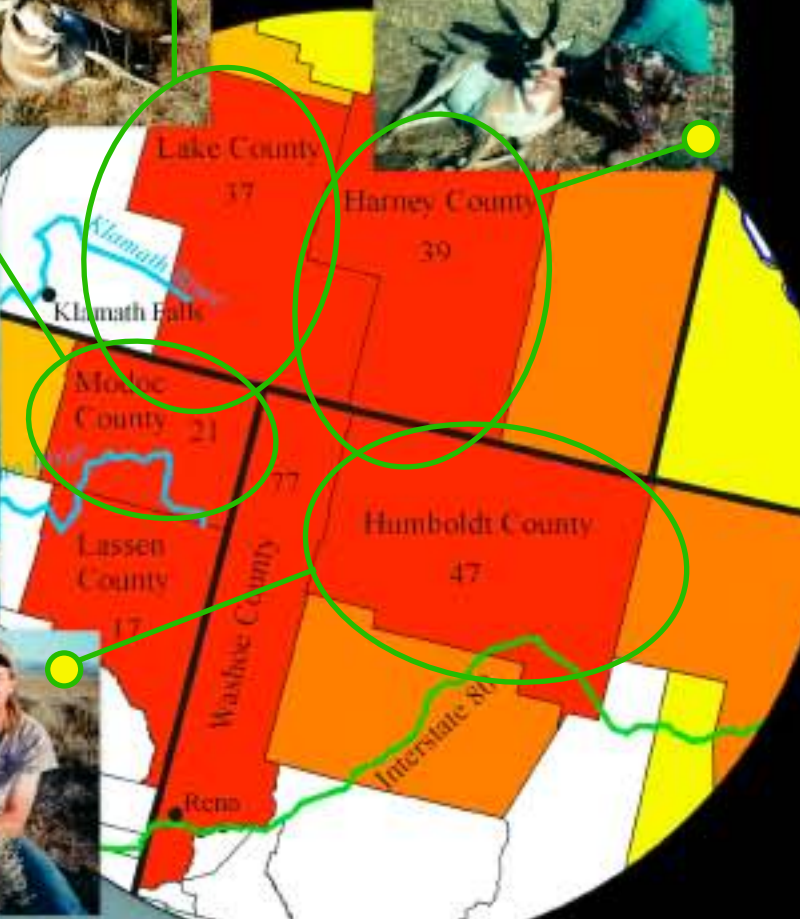


**STATE** OREGON  
**HUNTER** Sam Berry  
**LOCATION** Harney County  
**YEAR** 2000  
**SCORE** 92-6/8 Points

**STATE** OREGON  
**HUNTER** Jerry D. Donovan  
**LOCATION** Lake County  
**YEAR** 1997  
**SCORE** 80-6/8 Points



**STATE** CALIFORNIA  
**HUNTER** Trey Hickman  
**LOCATION** Modoc County  
**YEAR** 1998  
**SCORE** 84 Points



**STATE** NEVADA  
**HUNTER** John H. Parker  
**LOCATION** Humboldt County  
**YEAR** 2001  
**SCORE** 82-4/8 Points



**PRONGHORN DISTRIBUTION**

- 0 entries
- 1 entry
- 2-4 entries
- 5-15 entries
- 16 entries

the 1980s, with the remaining 300 entered prior to 1980.

The map includes 175 counties with at least one entry, and reveals three distinct core areas that produce higher numbers of records book pronghorn. These three core areas include a total of 24 counties, shown in red, that have at least 16 entries. These 24 counties account for 1,268 entries, or 71% of the records book. The remaining 151 counties have 513 entries, or 29 percent of the records book.

Perhaps the best region in the country for records book pronghorn is south-central Wyoming and northwestern Colorado. This core area is mainly in Wyoming, which has the largest pronghorn population of any state, and also has the two highest-ranking counties in Carbon (133) and Sweetwater (116). This area includes Fremont County (81) and Natrona County (72) that rank in the top 10 nationally. Moffat County (26) in Colorado and Rosebud County (25), one of 30 counties in Montana with entries, are also part of this core area. The 8 counties that make up this core area have 490 entries representing 28 percent of the records book.

Another core area revealed stretches across Arizona and New Mexico, with one additional county in Texas. This group of 10 counties has 540 entries, or 30 percent of the records

book. This area has six of the top ten counties, including Coconino County (93) which ranks third nationally and has the distinction of producing the previous World's Record pronghorn that was shot in 1985 by Michael J. O'Haco, Jr. and measures 93-4/8 points. Mora County, New Mexico, may provide hunters the best geographic opportunity to shoot a record-class pronghorn. At only 1,858 square miles in size, Mora County has 74 entries, which equates to one entry for every 25 square miles. Comparatively, Wyoming's Carbon County has 133 entries, but includes nearly 8,000 square miles, which equates to 1 entry for every 60 square miles. By visually comparing the land area and number of entries for each county, one can surmise that certain counties with fewer entries may actually provide a better opportunity than larger counties.

The smallest core area revealed in this study includes the six counties lo-

## TOP PRONGHORN COUNTIES

1. Carbon County, Wyoming	133 entries
2. Sweetwater County, Wyoming	116 entries
3. Coconino County, Arizona	93 entries
4. Fremont County, Wyoming	81 entries
5. Socorro County, New Mexico	80 entries
6. Washoe County, Nevada	77 entries

cated in southeastern Oregon, northwestern Nevada, and northeastern California. This cluster of counties includes a total of 238 entries, including Washoe County (77) which ranks sixth nationally. California has only 3 counties with entries, but these 3 have produced 40 entries, while Nevada is ranked fourth nationally with 151 entries.

This article concludes my five-part series of "geographic analysis" articles. This series has provided hunters pursuing these big game species a better understanding of the counties and regions that produce records book animals. More importantly, I have strived to show how mapping the spatial distribution of the trophies listed in Boone and Crockett Club's records book reveals patterns that relate to the habitat requirements, management practices, and the natural history of these amazing big-game animals. ■